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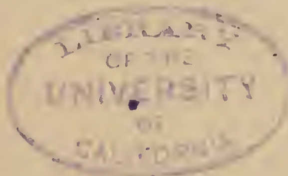
FOUR GREAT HUMANISTS

CORNELIUS B. BRADLEY

[Reprinted from the University of California Chronicle, Vol. IX, No. 1]



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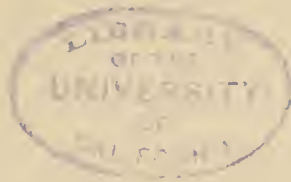

FOUR GREAT HUMANISTS.[1]

CORNELIUS B. BRADLEY.

There is one master problem of the ages;—a problem at which have toiled all generations of men, all races, all conditions, all times, all societies;—a problem which includes all others, summing up in its own vast synthesis everything that elsewhere is separately worked out as religion, philosophy, social order, art, science, or mastery of the material world. It is the human problem, as one of its latest students has called it:—how to make man truly human; how to bring him into the inheritance which is plainly his; how to realize for him the kingly destiny which all augury foretells; how to crown him—individually and socially, with that perfection of strength, beauty, and happiness in himself and in his surroundings, without which his life, however splendid in outward circumstance, must ever seem forlorn and tragic. The ages have toiled at this problem; but for the most part merely on some special element or factor in it, without any adequate vision of its vast scope—without clear consciousness even of what they were doing. Only twice, so far as we know, in the history of the race has the problem as a whole come clearly into view, and received the conscious consideration it calls for:—once in Plato's time, and once again in ours. Of that earlier treatment I shall not venture to speak in the presence of men who have made it their

[1] A paper read before the Berkeley Club, January, 1906.

special study; nor, having touched upon the matter in an earlier paper, shall I stop now to note the separate contribution which each of the great ancient civilizations made towards a future solution; nor yet of the part which, in these recent times, races other than our own have taken in its discussion. Suffice it to say that within the century just closed the human problem has become again the object of absorbing interest on the part of all thinking men, with a clearer vision than ever before of its real dimensions and of the multitude of factors involved, and with a more conscious determination to work it out unto some approximate solution both reasonable and practical. In this attempt our own English race has been among the very foremost, having received the full force of the ideas and the enthusiasm which ushered in the great Revolution, without the discouragement, disaster, and loss attending that crisis on the Continent. Its experience of world empire, its wealth —with the contrasts of human condition and of opportunity thereby revealed,—the buoyant hope of its own expansive movement, peopling the Antipodes with its colonies, and above all, its greatness of heart, its instinct for large affairs, and its traditional sense of moral responsibility, have all combined to force this problem upon the attention of its master minds—statesmen, seers, poets, artists, soldiers. Four of the men so engaged upon this problem—Carlyle, Emerson, Ruskin, Arnold—were gifted with eloquence and expressive power so extraordinary as to place them at once in the front rank of all the serious writers of the time. To each of these men was revealed one profound phase or aspect of the whole truth concerning man's salvation—one sentence of the complete revelation which the world yet waits to hear. Then his lips were touched as with a coal from the altar; and on his heart evermore was laid the burden of prophecy unto an amazed and too often a gainsaying world. Each in his long career became entangled in other matters, in controversies and criticisms which often

have obscured the real issue for which he stood. More unfortunately still, the utterance of one has often seemed opposed or denied by that of another, to the nullification of the real truth in both. But now that the babel of voices about them has subsided somewhat, and from a little distance we can distinguish their words more truly, it may be worth while, if we can, to put their separate sentences together, and spell out so much of the whole prophecy as it has been given them to teach. At the feet of these four prophets it has been my good fortune to sit often of late. So far as a professed learner and disciple of them all may without presumption attempt it, I desire to clear the master-thought of each from whatever is incidental or irrelevant, to apply whatever correction may prove necessary for point of view or personal bias, and to place it then in its true relation to that of the others—limiting myself strictly to their utterance on the one great problem we have named.

Of these four Carlyle comes first:—earliest in point of time, simplest and most direct in his language, in spirit and manner most nearly approaching his great prototype, the Hebrew prophet. The starting point of his thought was the misery and confusion of the world of men about him, its crying need of redemption, and the futility of expecting that disorder and unreason would ever mend themselves, or that any mere aggregation and summation of a world full of foolish and helpless individuals would ever develop the wisdom and virtue needed to establish and direct a happy human society.

The times in England were such indeed as to give pause to the most thoughtless. In the social world, an effete aristocracy, incapable longer of its high function of leadership, and concerned chiefly in keeping its own prestige and privilege intact; the rising power of commerce, with its new aristocracy of wealth, and its slogan of Supply and Demand; and finally the Enceladus of Democracy, starved, chained, and buried under Etna, but beginning to feel his

power, and to stir portentously in Corn Law agitation, Parliamentary reform, and Chartist uprisings. In the spiritual and moral world a corresponding chaos:—old faiths fiercely held in form, while their substance was fast dissolving away; shallow and complacent eighteenth century optimism, and *laissez-faire,* crying "Peace! Peace!" when the very structure of society seemed threatening to fall about their ears;—everywhere either an unreasoning confidence in formulas, or the lurking taint of insincerity, or the flat denial of materialism, or worst of all, sheer indifferentism. This view very likely may seem to us darker than the facts really warranted; but it was the view strongly held, even at a somewhat later date, by the other two Englishmen of our little group, and we may be sure that the case was serious indeed.

In a time, then, like that of John the Baptist, and in a mood like his, Carlyle began to preach, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" His work, like John's, was a work of preparation, and necessarily in large degree destructive. By him the axe was laid at the root of the tree, and every tree that bore not good fruit was to be hewn down and cast into the fire. Like John, he had no working scheme of outward and material betterment to offer, nor had he either faith in or patience for any such device. The real difficulty lay within, in a wrong state of the heart:—in pharisaical self-complacency, in belief in the efficacy of pretence, in unbelief in the eternal reality and power of truth and justice. These devils he would exorcise; in the repentant heart he would establish the beginnings of the life of faith and obedience;—for all further guidance and salvation, especially for the masses of mankind, he could only point expectant souls to the Hero-Savior sent of God, already no doubt among us, but awaiting the hour of his revealing. A noble message indeed, of commanding simplicity and power, preached from a thousand different texts, with unparalleled opulence and splendor of illustration, during

forty long years of prophetic ministry! A message profoundly true for all times; and perhaps for no age more needful than for that to which it was preached!

The thought behind this message was simple, too, though startling. Spirit is the ultimate and only reality. Man is spirit, and participant therefore of the divine nature. All real growth and betterment for man is spiritual betterment, whose motive force is the compulsion of love and reverence for a heavenly Ideal. But the mass of men are too blind to see or too weak to follow the Ideal unaided. The only hope for society, then, is the incarnation of divine power from time to time in certain individuals gifted with clear vision of the Ideal, and commissioned to guide and direct the human race on its march thither. These are the Hero-Kings. To discover and enthrone them is the supreme problem of society. To reverence and obey them is its only duty.

The limitations of this doctrine are obvious. Carlyle's emphasis is placed on the weakness and foolishness of human nature, which keeps the race,—and, if this were the whole truth, must forever keep it,—in a state of tutelage. The doctrine is therefore essentially pessimistic from the start; and pessimistic also in its effect, as the fate of its prophet abundantly shows. Human progress under its working alone can never become a steady growth; it must be rather a series of catastrophes or explosions which momentarily burst the bonds. But the forces which once have brought freedom soon become new chains to bind, until another deliverer must come to repeat the process, and so on *ad infinitum*. Moreover, in the case of the heaven-sent Hero, force, or perhaps we should say effectiveness—is too readily assumed to be the sure token of the inward graces of wisdom and goodness, which alone are saving,—a result, no doubt, of Carlyle's extraordinary delight in the contemplation of power;—while his instinct for dramatic illustration has led him to choose for us a most amazing gallery of saviors of society, from Odin and Mahomet to Frederick the Great,

and the bloody tyrant of Paraguay. But after all necessary corrections have been made for over-emphasis, for bias of temper, for limitation of view, what factors of the great problem are more universally true, or more constant, than these which Carlyle so eloquently enforced—man's outward need of inspired leadership, and his inward need of reverence and obedience?

It is no refutation or disparagement of Carlyle's doctrine to say that it is aristocratic. The aristocratic factor, we may be sure, can never be eliminated from the human scheme without the destruction of human society itself. The world may well be thankful that, at a time when its importance was greatly obscured, or even openly denied, there was found so valiant a champion and defender of it. But, as Tennyson tells us—

> God fulfills himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world;

—and the thought was Carlyle's before it was Tennyson's. The high doctrine of man's need of inspired leadership, through its slippery corollary of the divine right of kings, led straight, as we have seen, to the apotheosis of tyranny. That doctrine needed to be met and safeguarded by the counter-doctrine and truth of the divine inspiration of every man, the necessity of individual initiative, the duty of self-reliance. The prophet of this individualistic faith was our own Emerson, sincere admirer and life-long friend of Carlyle. Singularly enough, the philosophic basis of the two was identical:—that man is spirit, and partaker of the divine nature; that only by love and obedience to the heavenly call does he rise into a better life—can he attain salvation. But the one, considering humanity as massed in society, thought only of the call from without, the voice of divinely commissioned leadership. The other, considering the individual, thought only of the still small voice of inward prompting. Because his Hero-King did not appear when most he was needed, or, appearing, was thwarted and

brought to naught through the stupidity of men, Carlyle sank ever deeper and deeper into the pit of despair; while Emerson, sure that the soul is ever in communication with universal spirit and the source of all light, was radiant with hope. True, there were many things in the times and in his own immediate surroundings to favor this buoyancy of Emerson's thought. The nation whose life he shared was in the first flush of its youth, with a dawning sense of measureless opportunity and coming greatness—its magnificent resources as yet scarcely touched; its diversity, its roomy freedom, its untried problems all beckoning the aspiring spirit to enter in and possess. And no doubt these same things had much to do with the way in which this strong voice of faith and courage was heard and received. But his hope was as far as possible removed from that shallow American self-complacency which so often shames us in the eyes of the truly wise. It rested not on any special phase of time or circumstance, but on the unswerving conviction that God himself guides each soul of man, and He cannot guide him wrong. Nor was Emerson concerned beyond the individual, for, if the individuals are all God-guided, society, he argued, will take care of itself. A much more lofty and spiritual doctrine this than the other; yet for that very reason more difficult of ready application in a world not spiritual, but carnal.

The chief difficulty with the other scheme was to find the Hero-King, and get him enthroned,—and then to keep him from being spoiled by the servility and the flattery of men. But the difficulties in the way of any general application of Emerson's scheme are much more subtle and perplexing. First of all, the individual alone is its end. It scarcely recognizes society at all save in its reaction upon the individual spirit. The only real life is the secret life of thought. Society does scarcely more for that than to furnish the thinker with a convenient laboratory or a stage to which he may now and then come from his central solitude

and test the quality of his thought by putting it into action. History, the record of society, has for him no directive force;—the most that it can do for one is through its concrete embodiments to suggest to the soul certain features of the soul's own divine excellence which it might otherwise have overlooked. History is, in fact, but a mirror in which a man sees nothing but his own image. In travel and in art man finds nothing which he himself does not first bring to them. Government is a thing to be left to clerks and desks. Reforms, even of giant evils like slavery, excite in Emerson but the most languid interest. The heat and passion inevitable to them are evils quite as great as those they would displace. In fact, the reader is apt to find himself in a topsy-turvy world where "gravitation turns the other way"—where the part is greater than the whole, where *one* overbalances *all*.

Much of this confusion is due, no doubt, to Emerson's fondness for pungency and paradox, to his inveterate habit of whimsical over-statement, to his unwillingness to blur the sharp outline of a statement by any hint of the many qualifications and limitations which in his own case his clear sanity never failed to apply. But apart from this, the doctrine in itself is plainly esoteric, capable of being understood and practiced only by souls already enlightened. To others—to the "average sensual man" as Arnold calls him —its very basis and the terms in which it is announced are alike unintelligible. In his case what can be the outcome of counsels such as, "Act only upon your impulse," "Obey your heart," but horrors like those of the Salem witchcraft or of the Inquisition. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Denial of *all* external authority brings one perilously near to antinomianism. Emerson's reply to this criticism is characteristic: "If any one imagines that *this* law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day!"

But none of these criticisms can shake the real truth of

the law itself, or obscure the serene reflection of it in the character and life of Emerson. Nor can they lessen the value of that great tide of courage and aspiration which was, perhaps, to most of those who heard him the best result of his prophesying. I cannot think that any sincere soul was ever misled by Emerson's statement of the truth. Only shallow souls could ever have perverted the noble individualism of it into the silly and selfish travesty we all know too well.

Thus clearly were preached these two cardinal doctrines touching man's salvation; thus strongly were planted these two pillars of his hope; here, rightly in the main, were located the two foci of the curve of progress. Neither doctrine was new. Both were old—as old as the earliest spiritual thought on the subject. Yet each gathered from the circumstances of its utterance, from the needs of the age, and from the genius and character of the man, an emphasis and a quickening power well nigh unexampled in recent times. Rightly, in the main, I think we shall all agree, were these cardinal points located; but each with too exclusive attention, as though it alone were the center of the sphere,—with too little conscious reference to the other as its necessary correlate and complement. Both men planted themselves firmly on righteousness as the only salvation, and on divine guidance sought through reverence and faith, as the only means thereto. But divine guidance, in the thought of the one, was for the mass of men, and therefore mediate—incarnate in human leadership; in the thought of the other, it was for the individual, and therefore immediate—a distinct revelation from God. Its chief attribute for the one was action and force; for the other, thought and character. Each view is partial, and appeals to a distinct group of men; neither alone suffices for man's salvation. As Joubert finely says:[2] "Force and Right are rulers of this world; but Force till Right is ready." To bring these two

[2] Quoted by Arnold, Essays 1st Series, p. 12.

into harmony, to find the radii which link these foci together, so that from them both the true orbit of human progress may be more nearly found,—was a task reserved for other men; and one of these men was Ruskin.

Of the same ultimate conviction as Carlyle, though of kindlier temper, and confronted by the same social conditions, it was no doubt inevitable that he should become a follower and professed disciple of Carlyle. But it was equally inevitable that a nature so differently endowed and trained, so much wider in range both of experience and sympathy, should greatly modify Carlyle's stern and barren gospel of work. Seeing clearly the need of inspired leadership, he saw also what Carlyle failed to see,—the equal need of self-help and individual initiative. He had an abiding faith in our common human nature, which saved him alike from Carlyle's despair and from his consequent inaction. The leadership which, in his view, was to save the world, was not concentrated into fierce bursts of meteoric splendor, soon to be quenched in darkness as profound as ever; but distributed—lodged in its degree in every soul that truly loves truth and righteousness. The world he looked out upon seemed bad indeed; but he had no mind either to fold his hands in despair, or make the confusion worse by useless wailing and denunciation. Rather would he rouse every true heart within sound of his voice to range himself manfully on the side of order and right, and avail himself of whatever leadership might be at hand,—until through soldierly obedience he should himself become a leader in his place in the mighty army of God.

The correction which Ruskin here applies to Carlyle's scheme is important in many ways. First of all, it makes possible a continuous betterment of society, in place of fierce paroxysmal reform, with long succeeding periods of discouragement and relapse. Provision, moreover, is made for a continuous organization of society, evermore renewed from within, instead of its momentary organization out of

chaos by force from without—an effort which usually exhausts Carlyle's hero before he can accomplish much else. And, since all members of society are participant, the process is truly educative for all, and not merely coercive. In fine, Ruskin's scheme, though as thoroughly aristocratic as Carlyle's, faces in the opposite direction; for while Carlyle's interest seems wholly dramatic and spectacular, centered upon the person and the performance of the hero; Ruskin's is wholly practical, centered on the outcome to the masses.

But this correction is not all. Ruskin saw clearly—as Carlyle did not—that work alone cannot satisfy the need of the human spirit; nor work with obedience and reverence added. Even so, it is no better than slavery, unless there is for the workman joy in his work and in the fruits of it. Were we not all, alas, too familiar with the fact, with what horror and indignation should we regard an organization of society which inevitably dooms any of its members to work necessarily deadly?—to labor that kills the body, like that in the fierce heat at the furnace-mouth, or amidst noxious fumes; or labor that kills the soul through its unending monotony and infinitesimal range, as in many departments of manufacture with modern machinery; or labor that kills both body and soul,—so poorly paid that the utmost effort of the worker does not earn him enough sustenance to enable him to continue the work by which alone he lives! This dire evil Carlyle had seen,—had painted it in lines of fire on a background as black as the walls of Tartarus;—and there he had stopped. Ruskin set himself to do what he could to abate it; devoting thereto the full strength of his manhood, and a fortune by no means inconsiderable for those days. His efforts were manifold, but mainly along three lines: (1) To arouse the conscience of an indifferent public to a sense of its responsibility for its brother's blood, by a succession of appeals unparalleled for passionate earnestness and eloquence—the utterances by which Ruskin is

still most generally known. (2) To expose the fallacies—as he deemed them—of current economical theory, and the viciousness of commercial morals behind which the greed that wrought such cruel wrong was seeking to shelter itself. This matter is beset with too many difficulties to permit of its being handled here. I may only remark in passing that, upon the whole, Ruskin's way of thinking seems to be gaining ground among thoughtful men; namely, that there are values in the world which are *real,* and not merely the outcome of fortuitous "supply and demand"; that a nation's real wealth is in the life and character of its people, rather than in some accumulation of mere material things purchased perhaps at the sacrifice of that other; that an economy claiming to be called *political* should above all recognize and seek to conserve the chief values of the nation, or else, if unable or unwilling to concern itself with these, it should be content to wear the truer designation of *commercial* economy. All this, however, was but incidental to his main effort: (3) to improve both the character and the condition of the workingman, by helping him to help himself. This he would do by keeping constantly before the workingman higher ideals both of life and of work; by encouraging him to make himself master of his craft; and by creating among the wealthy a discriminating taste in favor of genuine hand-workmanship as against the machine-made article. Within the brief compass of this paper it is impossible to give any adequate idea of the amount of time and energy Ruskin put into this labor of love. Schools, museums, workingmen's colleges and classes, experimental farms, workshops, homes, communities; the enlistment and training of an army of helpers, incessant teaching, planning, writing, lecturing, printing;—until the over-tasked heart and brain could hold out no longer. He rests now from his labors, but his works do follow him, in Toynbee Halls, college settlements, workingmen's clubs, and organizations of similar intent throughout England, America, and the Antipodes.

My account of Ruskin's contribution to the human problem will not be complete, however, until I have recalled the work of his earlier years, and his remarkable vindication of the place and power of Beauty in human life, and its profound relation to character. Wordsworth and the poets no doubt were in this field before him, and Emerson, too; but to none had it ever been given to expound with such fullness of illustration and such convincing power the divine beauty which everywhere clothes the world,—in flower, bird, and tree; in valley, plain, and mountain; in river, sea, and sky. Ruskin approached this subject through Art, and nearly all his writing on it is ostensibly criticism of art. But while the beauty of art is included in his scheme, art is for him but a transcript, a memorandum, from Nature,—an appreciation and interpretation by a gifted soul of some glimpse of her transcendent beauty,—precious indeed, but chiefly so because it enables our duller eyes to see thenceforth in Nature what otherwise would have been hidden from them. And this, I take it, is precisely the value to us of Ruskin's writing on this theme. Never before had there been such an opening of blind eyes, such a quickening of dull senses, such conscious delight in the beauty of this fair world, as followed—and still follows—the reading of the Modern Painters.

Ruskin's work, then, as we review it, is seen to be very largely a correction of the narrowness of Carlyle's doctrine, a quickening of its barrenness by infusing into it the vital elements of brightness, hope, and self-help, and by illustrating in various ways its applicability to existing human society in all its degrees. In so doing he had availed himself, as we have seen, of certain important elements of Emerson's doctrine, though not, of course, necessarily derived from him. Still the correction as a whole was a distinct approximation toward Emerson's position. There was equal need, however, that Emerson's doctrine should receive correction; that his life of the spirit should be taken out of

its barren isolation, should be brought into the current of the world's life, enriching and enriched; that the individual be brought to recognize his relation and his obligation to society; that a liberty, threatening at any moment to explode into antinomianism and anarchy, should be taught its strict limits.

The man to apply these corrections was Matthew Arnold. Deeply enamored of the Greek brightness, intelligence, and reasoned self-control, he was shocked and affronted by the unreason, the freakishness, the excess which everywhere appeared in English character and life; and at first, chiefly by the entire absence of any sure standard of taste, or even of intelligence, in English literature. Here genius of the highest order, it seemed, did not avail to save a man from losing himself in eccentricity and caprice, from working on in serene ignorance of what elsewhere had been thought and done, and so wasting his powers on work foredoomed to failure. Popular approval was no sound criterion of excellence, though commonly accepted as such. The verdict of English criticism was of no avail, for it was as freakish and uncertain as the work it dealt with, voicing in oracular fashion nothing more than the critic's unreasoned and ignorant likes and dislikes. Bureaucratic control, like that of the French Academy, was plainly impossible,—abhorrent to all English traditions of freedom. What was to be done? How might any real standard of excellence be found to correct the vagaries of individual judgment and effort? Arnold's answer was that the nearest possible approximation to the absolute standard of excellence in any given field is to be found in a consensus of opinion on the part of the men best qualified to judge matters in that field; that is, men of judicial temper whose knowledge is such that they form their judgment of the new in the light of the best that has ever been known and thought on that subject. This is Arnold's famous method of criticism, neither autocratic, nor bureaucratic, nor the result of universal suffrage; but

aristocratic in the true sense of the term—a control by the best. The judges in this high court of criticism, it is true, are never finally gazetted and named; but that does not destroy its effectiveness. It matters little how many unworthy ones sit with them on the bench. The verdict of each "best" carries its own warrant of intelligence and fairness written on its face; all other votes are easily discovered and thrown out.

This method, it may be urged, is nothing but the method of plain common sense, practiced unconsciously from the beginning of the world, and the means of all progress made so far. Very true. But that does not prevent the method from being obscured or forgotten, and needing therefore to be rediscovered, consciously restated, and applied to new conditions; needing especially redefinition of the term so sure to be misunderstood or perverted, "the best." There can be no better proof of the need of it in Arnold's day than the revolution it wrought in English literary criticism; —a revolution of which Arnold was the pioneer, and in which he is still one of the chief landmarks.

The method was far-reaching, capable of widest application. Arnold began with literature, but it soon became evident that his interest was not so much in literature itself as in what lay behind it, namely, in life. Poetry for him was a criticism of life. With Socrates he was sure that an unexamined life is not worth living. So to English life as he found it, in all its chief aspects and problems, he began to apply the searching test of his analysis and criticism: to politics, manners, morals, religion; to the press, the church, the Bible, the Irish question, to "marriage with a deceased wife's sister"! Everywhere he found the same faults:—"want of sensitiveness of intellectual conscience, disbelief in right reason, dislike of authority," blind following of "stock notions and habits," foolish complacency in "doing as one likes." To Arnold himself were strikingly applicable the words he wrote of Goethe:—

Physician of the iron age,
He took the suffering human race;
He read each wound, each weakness clear,
And struck his finger on the place,
And said: "*Thou ailest here, and here!*"

Of course, there was tremendous outcry on the part of those who felt his lancet and probe—an outcry to which we on this side of the Atlantic contributed our full share, whenever our pet weaknesses were touched.

But what is to be the remedy for all this? Culture, which Arnold explains to be the "pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits."[3] Culture is not merely "the endeavor to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, which it is man's happiness to go along with, or his misery to go counter to"—not merely thus to learn "reason and the will of God," but beyond this, it is the endeavor "to make reason and the will of God prevail."[4] The perfection which culture aims at is "an inward condition of mind and spirit, not an outward set of circumstances"—[5] "a growing and a becoming, not a having and a resting." "And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest, or to have perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a general expansion. Perfection is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled, if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march toward perfection, to be continually doing all he can to en-

[3] Culture and Anarchy, Preface, xi.
[4] Culture and Anarchy, p. 9.
[5] Ibid., p. 12.

large and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward.''[6] And finally, perfection ''is a harmonious expansion of all the powers which make beauty and worth in human nature, and is not consistent with the development of any one power at the expense of the rest.''[7]

This statement of Arnold's position brings out clearly both the agreement between him and Emerson, and the difference. Both seek perfection, and that perfection is inward and spiritual; but unlike Emerson, Arnold sees clearly that the plant of perfection cannot be grown *in vacuo,* but only in the soil of human society, with the help of its bracing and corrective contact;—that indeed it is not a plant at all, but a harvest waving to the utmost bounds of earth. The life which quickens and guides its growth both call by the same name, Reason, and each adds his own illustrative synonyms: ''Reason and the soul which inspires all men,'' says Emerson. ''Reason and the will of God,'' says Arnold. But they are not quite the same thing. Emerson's Reason is intuitive, transcendent—a direct vision of ultimate truth. For Arnold, as for Tennyson, the ''will of God'' is none other than ''the increasing purpose'' which ''through the ages runs,'' known to us only as we watch its unfolding. Of anything claiming to be ''the will of God'' we can be sure only by seeing how it coincides with the observed curve of human progress. Arnold, in fact, only reiterates and enforces the caution uttered long ago by St. John: ''Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.'' For any such caution we look in vain in Emerson's writing. Was it because his own serene intelligence and his well-ordered instincts seemed to call for little such correction; or was his championship of liberty so absorbing that without thought of results he would sweep away every element of control and authority? I cannot say. Lastly, both men stood aloof from participation in any scheme of practi-

[6] Ibid., p. 11.
[7] Ibid., p. 12.

cal reform, and upon much the same stated grounds, namely, that all real reform is of the spirit, and not of circumstance, and that the spiritual aim is apt to be lost in the hurly-burly and strife of practical reform. But behind this common reason there seems to be in the one case a distinct lack of interest in action itself as unimportant, while in the other interest in action is plainly so great and so objective that the thinker detaches himself from action that he may the more surely follow its course and judge its outcome.

A summary of these separate teachings might run somewhat as follows:—

"Man is spirit," says Carlyle, "and destined to be partaker of the fullness of God. That this end may be achieved, God's help is given the race in the shape of inspired leadership, with the accompanying discipline of reverence, obedience, and work." "God's help is given," says Emerson, "through direct illumination of the individual spirit, with the discipline of thought, freedom, and self-reliance." "The leadership vouchsafed to society," says Ruskin, "is not merely occasional, autocratic, and spectacular, but constant, reciprocal, and educative for all. The obedience required is not blind submission to force, but a loving outreach toward excellence. Nor is work a barren exaction of effort that we may exist, but it is the only means by which we may lay hold of the joy destined for us in each other, and in Nature, and in thought. 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'" "God speaks, no doubt," says Arnold, "to our secret soul; but we must make sure that it is His voice we hear, and not some echo out of our own dreams and vain imaginings. Our private impression, therefore, must be tested and corrected by His word as it is writ large and unmistakable on the pages of human history, and in the lines of human thought. And only by a progress which enlarges all sides of our nature, and carries with it all members of our race, shall we ever come unto a perfect manhood, 'unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of God.'"